

# 2003 Xeriscape Contest Award Winners



Tohono Chul Park and the Arizona Department of Water Resources recognized the winners of their 2003 Xeriscape Contest at a ceremony at Tohono Chul Park on May 15. Awards were given to recognize the work of professionals and property owners who have made innovative and appropriate use of native and low-water-use plants, water harvesting, graywater and efficient irrigation systems.

The main reason for this contest is to increase awareness of innovations in landscaping and water efficiency and to encourage others to utilize these practices to create beautiful landscapes. The use of Xeriscaping and native plants is an important aspect of desert-appropriate landscaping and promoting water conservation in our community. Fine examples of these exist throughout the Tucson area, and the following were recognized for their outstanding landscapes:



## HOMEOWNER AWARDS

### Homeowner First Place: Wendy Timm

Described as having a “good eye for what’s nice, surprising and fun,” this design by homeowner Wendy Timm incorporates whimsical details everywhere you look. From the homeowner’s sculptures of friends dancing in her garden to the inexpensive materials used to create welcoming spaces, this landscape truly drew the judges in. It appears that Wendy was able to overcome one of her biggest obstacles (her bad knees and back) to create the environment she wanted, inspired by the Desert Museum, Tucson Botanical Garden and Tohono Chul Park.



[click here for additional photos](#)

In addition, Wendy’s use of native plants that create wildlife habitats for birds, lizards and many other small animals has won her the Judges Award for “Best Design to Attract Native Wildlife”.

## PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

### Professional Residential First Place: Joe Billings “The Landscaping Artist” for the Colville Residence

“The Wonderland of Rocks Habitat Garden” was designed to have the look and feel of a lush natural habitat while allowing roof runoff to flow slowly through and in close proximity to planting areas. Judges were impressed by the fact that every plant was low water use with a variety of colors and textures. They also commented on the many seating areas, creating an intimate space, which also attracts wildlife.



[click here for additional photos](#)

## **Professional Residential Second Place: Marla Ruane, Greening Fine Gardens for the Schorr Residence**

The primary goal of this backyard redesign was to expand and update outdoor living areas. This complete renovation of an El Encanto backyard was highly rated by the judges. They especially commented on the attention to detail and color which was partially achieved by removing a portion of the pool decking and replacing it with native and low water using plants including Desert Marigold, Peruvian Apple and Knife Acacia. Sculptures throughout the garden also create a whimsical feeling.



[click here for additional photos](#)

In addition, because what Marla had to start with was a “very East Coast” landscape with many high water use plants, the judges also gave her the award for “Best Retrofit of a High Water Using Landscape”.

## **Commercial and Industrial:**

### **First Place Medians and Rights of Way: Greey and Picket, AAA Landscape for their Streetscapes, Medians and Walking Trails in Dove Mountain**

Described by the judges as materials including an harmonizing with both the wonderfully with the surrounding trees and cacti were replanted keeping with the natural look and strolling along the contoured development.



having a terrific variety of plant impressive use of area natives, surrounding landscape and integrating desert. According to AAA, site-salvaged along the roadside and in medians, in feel that residents truly enjoy while pathways that meander through the

The judges also gave AAA the award for “Best Revegetation of a Disturbed Desert” since this landscape blends so well with the surrounding desert, and because at one time, it was completely disturbed due to construction of the housing development.



### **Second Place Medians and Rights of Way: Jay Hick, AAA Landscape for Starr Pass**

The planning concept was to restore the construction-disturbed areas to present a natural appearance. The project included salvaging 300 saguaros, numerous large, native trees and over 5,000 cacti. The judges enjoyed the use of colorful of penstemons and Globe Mallows interspersed between the shrubs, trees and brittlebush.



## PUBLIC EDUCATION:

### First Place, Harelson Elementary School

This landscape educates the students, staff and visitors at Harelson Elementary School by requiring the participation of students and teachers to plant and maintain it and by sharing the botanical and common names of most of the plants with visitors. In addition to the attractive arrangement of the gardens at the school, water harvesting was incorporated along with benches that also offer a cool place to sit during classes. The judges also noted that the trees selected for this design are “eclectic and unusual – a nice touch.”



[Click here for additional photos](#)

## JUDGES' AWARDS - PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

### Best Water Harvesting in a Small Space: Lesley Mansur, Pomeroy Residence



Backyard prior to contouring for water harvesting

The water harvesting in the arroyo of this residence caught the eye of the judges. The contouring of the arroyo coupled with the mix of colorful xeric and exotic plants did not escape their notice, either. It appears that this landscape also attracts the notice of butterflies, birds and even the occasional bobcat cub, in addition to being a joy to the homeowners.



Backyard after contouring for water harvesting

[Click here for additional photos](#)

### Best Use of Natives: Roberta Braegelmann, Sonoran Gardens, Luevano/Trinder Residence

The judges noted the nice mix of cacti, mesquite, greasewood, ocotillo, cholla and prickly pear that enhanced the native desert surroundings in this landscape.



Interspersed with hummingbird plants, it was obvious that the goal for this design was to enhance the natural, undisturbed, desert landscape with southwest native plants that offered color and interest.



## JUDGES' AWARDS - HOMEOWNER CATEGORY

### Best Collection of Cacti and Succulents: Valarie Miller

For creating this landscape of great interest, the judges awarded Valarie Miller the "Best Collection of Cacti and Succulents". This homeowner says that the landscape evolved rather than being a planned design, with many of the plants starting out in pots. Perhaps this is why the eclectic mix of cacti and succulents look so healthy. The judges noted that her plant collection is very well maintained and they enjoyed the unusual and interesting specimens. The sculptural qualities of the large boobums, senita, Peruvian Apple and many others are so eye-catching, visitors are prone to stop and stare a while.



[Click here for additional photos](#)

### Special Treatment of a Hillside or Slope: J.P. Bradley



The owner and installer of this landscape has been working on it since 1997, planting every inch of it on his own creating a space that is not only beautiful but appealing to all the senses. This may seem like someone who is just REALLY into his yard. However, what makes this truly extraordinary is that this designer is legally blind! J.P. Bradley says his yard has become his primary hobby, and when you talk with him about his landscape, you can feel his enthusiasm.

The judges commented that the landscape has a nice collection of cacti and succulents, a neat improvised fireplace, rock paths that resist erosion, and interesting paths make a person want to explore!

[Click here for additional photos](#)

### Best Use of Water Harvesting: Deborah Tosline



Ms. Tosline did not have any experience in gardening or landscaping prior to taking on her front and back yards. However, the project allowed her to design and construct an environment that reflects her love of the Sonoran Desert, her interest in water conservation and her desire to attract wildlife while at the same time enhancing privacy. The judges felt that her design succeeded on all counts, appreciating the hills and channels in the front yard that catch rainfall runoff from the front and backyard and the front roof. This runoff flows through swales directed to her many native plants, which both

attract wildlife and provide screening. She also excavated her backyard to create a sunken "living room" with a carpet of grass. This area serves as a catch basin during the rainy seasons allowing her to retain water on site and water her grass with rainwater!



[Click here for additional photos](#)



## HONORABLE MENTION:

### Plant Collection, Kimber DeLorenzo

Anyone who talks with this homeowner is immediately aware that she has a passion for her landscape and truly enjoys adding more plants to it and creating more livable outdoor spaces in it. As Kimber DeLorenzo says herself, "A garden is a work in progress. It is ever changing."



For the variety of plant types and her enthusiasm for constant evolution, the judges awarded this homeowner an honorable mention in Plant Collection.



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Professionals and homeowners were judged separately. All landscapes must have been at least two years old. ADWR and Tohono Chul Park will again be hosting this Tucson area contest in 2004. For more information on the 2004 contest, contact April Bourie at Tohono Chul Park at (520) 742-6455, ext. 220 or, Christina Bickelmann at ADWR (520) 770-3816.

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